

Docket No. AUS920010447US1

CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

1. A method of augmenting digital rights management,
5 the method comprising:
 associating a first field with an electronic
document, wherein the first field identifies a current
owner of the electronic document; and
 associating a second field with the electronic
10 document, wherein the second field contains information
about previous ownership of the electronic document; and
 wherein access control software allows access to the
property only upon verification that a user satisfies
specified requirements for access.
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2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the access
control software restricts use of the electronic property
to the person identified as the current owner.
- 20 3. The method according to claim 1, further comprising
notifying the electronic property's manufacturer in case
of property rights violations.
4. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
25 if ownership of the electronic document is
transferred from the current owner to a subsequent owner:
 in the first field, replacing the current
owner's name with the subsequent owner's name; and
 in the second field, adding information about
30 the subsequent owner.

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5. The method according to claim 4, further comprising allowing access to the property by the subsequent owner only after the current owner has electronically signed an entry identifying the subsequent owner.

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6. The method according to claim 4, further comprising storing the information associated with the ownership transfer in a backup server.

10 7. The method according to claim 4, further comprising sending notice of the transfer of ownership to the electronic property's manufacturer.

15 8. The method according to claim 4, wherein the subsequent owner inherits the same access privileges as the current owner.

10 9. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
if use of the electronic document is temporarily
loaned by the current owner to a borrower:

associating a third field with the electronic document, wherein the third field identifies the current borrower of the electronic document and designates the duration of the time period of the loan; and

25 wherein access control software allows borrower access to the property only during the duration of the loan period.

30 10. The method according to claim 9, wherein access control hardware restricts access to the electronic property to the person identified as borrower.

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11. The method according to claim 9, wherein the current owner cannot access the electronic property during the duration of the loan period.

5 12. The method according to claim 9, further comprising storing the information about the loan in a backup server.

10 13. The method according to claim 9, wherein the current owner may simultaneously loan the electronic property to multiple borrowers.

15 14. The method according to claim 9, further comprising sending notice of the loan to the electronic property's manufacturer.

20 15. The method according to claim 9, wherein the borrower acquires a specified portion of the owner's access privileges.

16. The method according to claim 1, wherein the property title is stored in the same file with the digital property itself.

25 17. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for use in a data processing system, for augmenting digital rights management, the computer program product comprising:

30 instructions for associating a first field with an electronic document, wherein the first field identifies a current owner of the electronic document; and

instructions for associating a second field with the electronic document, wherein the second field contains information about previous ownership of the electronic document; and

18. The computer program product according to claim 17,
10 wherein the access control software restricts use of the
electronic property to the person identified as the
current owner.

20. The computer program product according to claim 17,
20 further comprising:

instructions for replacing the current owner's name with the subsequent owner's name in the first field;

instructions for adding information about the subsequent owner in the second field.

21. The computer program product according to claim 20,
30 further comprising instructions for allowing access to

the property by the subsequent owner only after the current owner has electronically signed an entry identifying the subsequent owner.

- 5 22. The computer program product according to claim 20,
further comprising instructions for storing the
information associated with the ownership transfer in a
backup server.
- 10 23. The computer program product according to claim 20,
further comprising instructions for sending notice of the
transfer of ownership to the electronic property's
manufacturer.
- 15 24. The computer program product according to claim 20,
wherein the subsequent owner inherits the same access
privileges as the current owner.
- 20 25. The computer program product according to claim 17,
further comprising:
if use of the electronic document is temporarily
loaned by the current owner to a borrower:
instructions for associating a third field with the
electronic document, wherein the third field identifies
25 the current borrower of the electronic document and
designates the duration of the time period of the loan;
and
wherein access control software allows borrower
access to the property only during the duration of the
30 loan period.

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26. The computer program product according to claim 25, wherein access control hardware restricts access to the electronic property to the person identified as borrower.

5 27. The computer program product according to claim 25, wherein the current owner cannot access the electronic property during the duration of the loan period.

28. The computer program product according to claim 25,
10 further comprising instructions for storing the information about the loan in a backup server.

29. The computer program product according to claim 25,
15 wherein the current owner may simultaneously loan the electronic property to multiple borrowers.

30. The computer program product according to claim 25,
further comprising instructions for sending notice of the loan to the electronic property's manufacturer.

20 31. The computer program product according to claim 25, wherein the borrower acquires a specified portion of the owner's access privileges.

25 32. The computer program product according to claim 17, wherein the property title is stored in the same file with the digital property itself.

30 33. A system for augmenting digital rights management, the method comprising:

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a first register which associates a first field with an electronic document, wherein the first field identifies a current owner of the electronic document; and

wherein access control software allows access to the
10 property only upon verification that a user satisfies
specified requirements for access.

15 if ownership of the electronic document is
transferred from the current owner to a subsequent owner:

20 a second updating component which adds
information about the subsequent owner in the second
field.

if use of the electronic document is temporarily
loaned by the current owner to a borrower:

a third register which associates a third field with the electronic document, wherein the third field identifies the current borrower of the electronic document and designates the duration of the time period of the loan; and

wherein access control software allows borrower access to the property only during the duration of the loan period.